

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Emily Becker

Shall we talk about the weather? Every week nature gives us so much to discuss!

This year, according to my memory, March was very cold, April very warm, and then May, ugh, cold and windy. It seemed like my squash took a very long time getting started, and I am picking strawberries much later than normal. I've also usually had a ripe raspberry by now, too, and that is still at least a week away. Alaska Public Media recently interviewed peony growers about the "colder weather and lack of sun." Is this summer colder than normal? Are things "late?"

Luckily we can rely on more than just memory and hunches. There's quantifiable experience, ie, data. Green-up, the time when birch trees leaf out and a green hue appears across the land, occurred right on schedule in early May. And despite the feeling in my bones, the

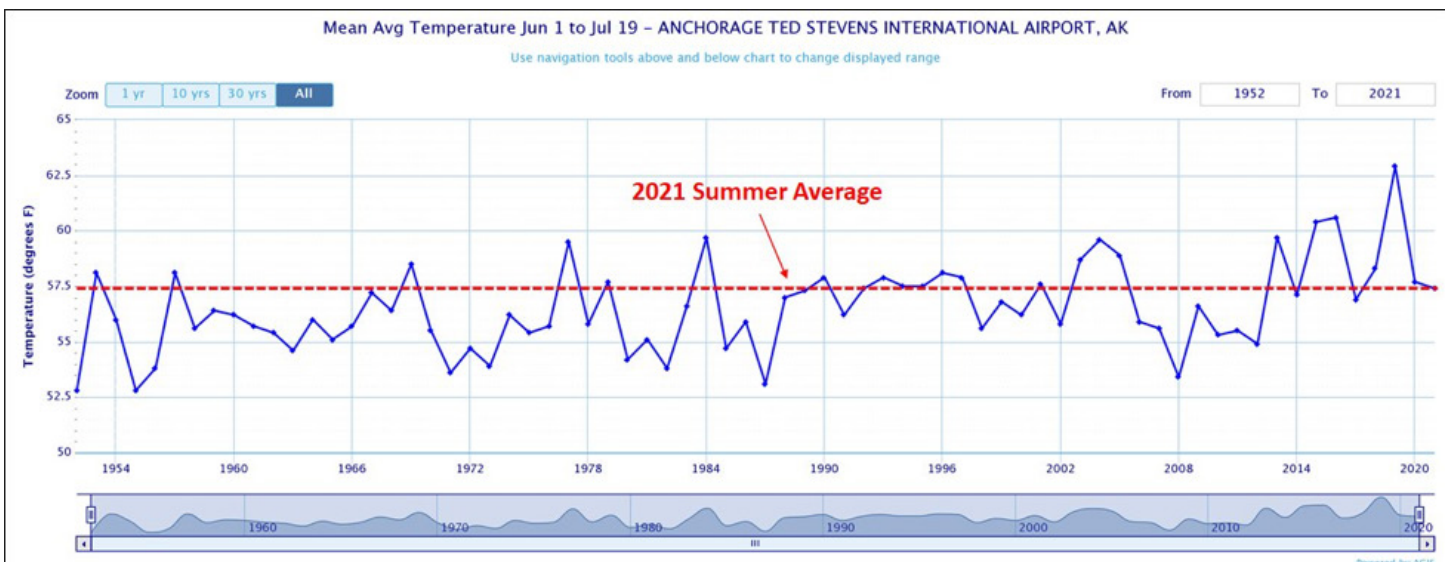
summer hasn't been cold. Local climatologist Dr. Brian Brettschneider (and AMGA February presenter) created the first graph shown below to show that our summer average temperature is still well above normal, at least considering the last 70 years.

In addition, we've had the usual amount of solar energy.

The second graph shown on the next page, also from Dr. Brettschneider, shows the average daily solar energy as recorded at the Climate Reference

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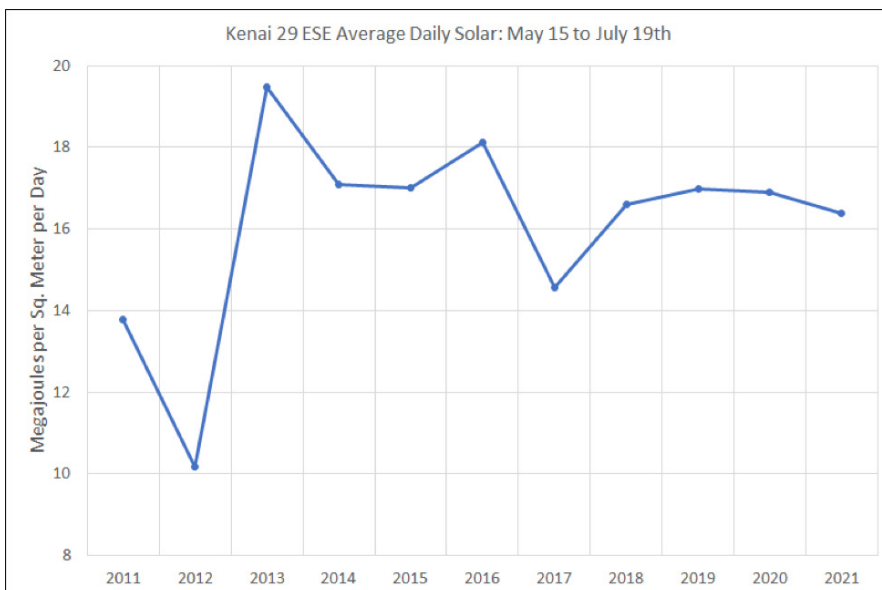


# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONT.

Network station 29 miles east of Kenai. We've had the usual amount of energy to nurture plant growth.

This is to say, our lived experience is a small part of the big picture, and we are often terribly unreliable reporters.

How fortunate we are to be able to live, observe, and enjoy the passing of the seasons. Maybe it's better to just enjoy the unfolding of each summer day. I'm glad someone else is recording the numbers and taking notes. Nature is always right on time. 🌱



## JUNE 2021 AMGA TREASURER'S REPORT

### Balances on 06/01/2021

Checking S-88	\$21,642.32
Savings S-1	\$5.25
Savings S-19	\$16,913.94
CD General 2 year 1.95%; 1/23	\$10,686.49

**Total Assets** \$49,248.00

**Interest/Dividends** \$2.78

### This month's revenue

Membership	\$193.04
Donations	\$5.00
Fundraising/Plant sale	

**Total revenue** \$198.04

### This month's expenses

Grants	\$750.00
Operations	\$824.56
Website	\$587.99
Plant sale	\$817.80
Pioneer Home Garden	\$168.00

**Total Expenses this month** \$3,148.35

### BALANCES ON 6/30/2021

Checking S-88	\$18,692.01
Savings S-1	\$5.25
Savings S-19	\$16,916.72
CD General 2 Year 1.95%, (1/23)	\$10,714.47

**Total Assets on 5/31/2021** \$46,328.45

Prepared by Jan van den Top on 07/10/2021

**GOT SOMETHING TO SHARE WITH FELLOW GARDENERS? SEND BIRD CHATTER ITEMS TO:**  
[BIRDCHATTER@ALASKAMASTERGARDENERS.ORG](mailto:BIRDCHATTER@ALASKAMASTERGARDENERS.ORG)



### Contact the Herb Study Group

If you want to volunteer, have questions or you want to be added to the Herb Study Group email list, please email us at [anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com](mailto:anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com) or call Elaine at 276-4295 and leave her a message.

OUTSIDE THE ALASKA BOTANICAL GARDEN  
4515 CAMPBELL AIRSTRIP ROAD, ANCHORAGE, AK



# LATE SEASON PLANT SALE

HARDY PERENNIALS \* UNIQUE HOUSEPLANTS \* OUTDOOR ART \* GARDENING ADVICE \* FREE CLASSES

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 2021  
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

10:30 ALASKA GARDENS FALL AND WINTER TO-DO LIST, GINA DIONNE  
11:30 MOUNTING ORCHIDS ON CORK, PAUL MARMORA  
12:30 BRING YOUR GARDENING QUESTIONS, DEBBIE HINCHEY

WWW.ALASKAMASTERGARDENERS.ORG



## HOW TO JOIN THE PLANT SALE by Sue Negus

The AMGA Late Season Plant Sale is scheduled for Saturday, August 14 in the Benny Benson parking lot across from ABG. We have three classes scheduled, starting at 10:30 a.m. There will also be a space for gently used tools and nice (not the black ones) pots that you do not need anymore. There will not be a pot recycle this year.

The plants will need white tags identifying what plant it is and a yellow tag with your initials and a price. AMGA is supplying the yellow tags. You can get them from me or Emily Becker. I will carry them with me to the garden tours. I can leave them on my front porch and you can get them anytime. Objects, garden art, tools and pots, will need to have a yellow sticker with price and initials.

This is a good opportunity to get volunteer hours. Setup will be the day before on Friday the 13th. AMGA really needs a lot of help setting up. Sign up via the Signup Genius: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0E4CAAAD2BA6FD0-amga>

We are also in need of tables and tents. You can also sign up to bring tables and tents on Sign-Up Genius.

This is also a good opportunity to meet other Master Gardeners. If you have questions, call or text Susan Negus at 907-227-6288 or send an e-mail to [senegus@gci.net](mailto:senegus@gci.net). 🌱

*Editor's note: You can usually find the white tags at garden stores or they are available via Amazon. Word of advice: don't wait until the last minute!*



# HERB STUDY: HOREHOUND by Elaine Hammes

What is *Marrubium vulgare*?

If this name is not familiar, try horehound. It isn't just an odd-flavored candy that a grandparent got for you. Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*) is described by some as a tender, drought hardy perennial. Others call it invasive, particularly the USDA Forest Service Southwestern Region. It is easy to grow, even in poor soils, and is hardy down to USDA Zone 3 or 4. It can spring up in nutrient deficient areas and sandy soils, reproducing by seeds, roots or cuttings.

Horehound is a grey-leaved herbaceous perennial plant, growing 1-3 feet tall. The hairy leaves are 1-2 inches long with a densely crinkled surface. The generally white flowers are borne in clusters along the main stem.

Horehound belongs to the *Lamiaceae* family, which includes mint, pennyroyal, sage, and oregano.

While horehound is native to Europe, northern Africa, and southwestern and central Asia, it is widely naturalized in many places, including most of North and South America. In Arizona and Texas, it is identified as a species of concern due to its weedy characteristics, reproducing from seeds and spreading roots. Horehound can form dense monoculture stands over large areas and seeds can remain viable for up to five years.

Records of ABG's Herb Garden show that horehound seeds were planted in 2018. By September the same year, these plants were flowering even though some sources indicate horehound would not flower until the second year. If any of these plants survived in 2019 or 2020, they were weeded out, but in 2021 there have been two plants volunteering.

Historically, horehound has been mentioned in

conjunction with medicinal use dating at least back to the 1st century BC, when it appeared as a remedy for respiratory ailments and for expelling worms in farm animals. It was also used in ancient Egypt, Greece, traditional Chinese, Australian aboriginal, and ayurvedic medicine; and was particularly popular during the Middle Ages in Europe.



Horehound at the ABG Herb Garden. Photo courtesy Mary Contrary.

Horehound contains vitamins A, B, C, E, essential fatty acids, iron and potassium. Active ingredients include several types of terpenoid compounds including marrubiin, which could have antioxidant, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic and analgesic properties. However, there is no clear evidence of medicinal value.

The fresh horehound leaves are bitter and quite unpleasant. Combining it with sugar helps to balance out the bitterness. Horehound candy drops are bittersweet, hard candies like cough drops that are made with sugar and an extract of *Marrubium vulgare*. They are dark-colored, dissolve in the mouth, and have a flavor that has been compared to menthol and root beer. Like other products derived from *M. vulgare*, they are sometimes used as an unproven folk treatment for coughs and other ailments. Horehound is also used to make beverages such as horehound beer (similar to root beer), horehound herbal tea, and a rock and rye cocktail.

As with many herbs, be cautious: It is possible to have too much horehound. Consuming an excessive amount, could result in diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting. It may impact blood sugar, blood pressure, and heart rhythm. While rare, the impact can be serious. Having an occasional horehound candy probably won't hurt. 🌿



# SCENES FROM 2021 AMGA GARDEN TOURS



From left to right: tulips at the Forget-Me-Not Nursery; Steve and Lou Ann Hennig's garden; Marsha Burns and Lynn Highland in their garden; Faye Stiehm with a peony bouquet at the Brown Hen Farm; Barb Henjum, co-owner of the Brown Hen Farm; Meg O'Mullane with her vegetable raised beds; a garden sculpture centerpiece in the Burns-Highland garden. See the remaining AMGA 2021 garden tour dates and locations on page 7.



# AUGUST 2021 EVENT CALENDAR

## CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

### Tuesday, August 3, 12 pm

Mat-Su Experimental Farm & Extension Center: Garden Journals and Designs. Many of the best note takers and journalists I know are gardeners. Let's talk about some great ways to plan for a crafty garden journal and other great ways to document your amazing gardening ways! Led by Jodie Anderson. Via Zoom. [Register here.](#)

### Thursday, Aug 5, 12 pm

Mat-Su Experimental Farm & Extension Center: Dehydrating Fruits and Vegetables (including Herbs). Methods of dehydration, steps in drying fruits and vegetables, fruit leather, equipment, storage, rehydration and use of dried foods. Making jerky and smoking fish will be reviewed. Safety and storage of non-preserved foods will also be discussed. Via Zoom. [Register here.](#)

### Tuesday, August 10, 5:30-7 pm

Urban Harvest: Creative Uses for an Abundance of Kale, hosted by the Anchorage Museum. Late-summer gardens are bountiful, and greens like kale provide for warm-weather eating and storing for winter. Take a look at objects in the Anchorage Museum collection aiding in harvest and food storage, then learn from Edible Alaska contributor Jonathan Bower as he describes some methods of using and preserving summer greens. Make a kale recipe and take home your own portion. Registration required; materials provided. \$10, \$9 members. [Read more/register.](#)

## MEETINGS & EVENTS

### Tuesday, August 3, 7-7:30 pm

Alaska Botanical Garden: Verna Pratt Wildflower Trail Dedication. The community is invited to join ABG for a formal dedication of the Wildflower Trail to Verna Pratt, local Alaska wildflower expert, educator, author and ABG volunteer and friend.

### Saturday, August 14, 10-3 pm

AMGA Plant Sale at the Benny Benson School on Campbell Airstrip Road.

### Tuesday, August 17, 6-7 pm

Alaska Botanical Garden: Walking Tour of the Garden. Make the most of our short growing season, learn to identify Alaskan plants and find out what's blooming in our collections with one of our monthly walks in the Garden.

Be sure to dress for the weather (good walking shoes or boots, rain layers, bug spray, hat, sunglasses, water). Space is limited; pre-registration is encouraged (space will fill up quickly). No refunds for cancellations made with less than 48 hours of the tour. \$8 for Members/\$10 for Non-Members. [Register here.](#)

## JOBS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, ETC.

The Grow North farmstand along Mountain View Drive is open 4-7 pm, Mondays to Fridays. selling fresh produce picked onsite that day. Food trucks on site 4-7 pm on Thursdays. Contact Nick Bachman for more info at 865-5213 or [nbachman@anchorageandtrust.org](mailto:nbachman@anchorageandtrust.org).

AMGA is seeking program topics for future monthly member meetings. Most of the spaces are filled for 2021 but we are looking for 2022 topics. If you have ideas, please contact AMGA vice president Troy Weiss at [troydweiss@gmail.com](mailto:troydweiss@gmail.com).

Check out a wide range of volunteer opportunities with local garden projects at [Volunteers 4 Anchorage Gardens](#), a list compiled by AMGA and the Alaska School Garden Network.

Did you miss Brenda Adams' "Mastering Garden Design" class? AMGA will offer it again in the fall. Date/time TBA. [Sign up here](#) to make sure you get the first notice. Please note that this class will not be offered for an Advanced Certificate and will be open to all gardeners.

AMGA is surveying members on topics for the next Advanced MG class. Give your input by filling out [our online survey](#).

# BIRD CHATTER

**Jeff Lowenfels in the New York Times!** You'll probably need to create a login/password to read it, but the New York Times published an extensive interview with our local newspaper garden columnist on June 28. It's a fascinating read, telling the strange path of how he became a garden writer, how his views on gardening changed, and how his weekly columns provide a record of climate change in our region.

**Ginger Hudson in the Juneau Empire!** Former AMGA Newsletter editor Ginger Hudson was featured in a recent Juneau Empire article introducing her as the new Jensen-Olson Arboretum manager. Read the article and check out the photos [here](#).

**Trouble overwintering foxgloves?** Heather Tauschek writes that she finally got foxgloves to overwinter in her Anchorage Hillside garden. Every year they would make it through the winter until the snow completely melted, but they would die off with the first hard frost after the snow melted.

"This year I put propagation domes/cloches over them as soon as the snow melted, and they made it!!!" Heather said.

**All about roseroot** Ever wanted to know more about growing your own rhodiola? Janice Berry wrote that Alaska Rhodiola ([www.akroseroot.com](http://www.akroseroot.com)) has a series of new YouTube videos on their own channel. The videos helped clarify and identify if it was a thug or a valuable medicinal plant, she said.

**You say potato...** Alaska gardeners on social media have been spreading the word about determinate versus indeterminate potatoes. It matters in deciding whether or not to hill them and which potatoes are better suited to grow in pots or bags versus the ground. For example, Red Norland is described by the Extension Service at North Dakota State University as a determinate potato (plants stop producing new growth after tuber initiation) and Russet Burbank is described as indeterminate (plants continue producing new growth indefinitely). An example of an Alaska indeterminate is Magic Molly.

Apparently, the determinate potatoes are faster growing and don't need to be mounded, whereas the indeterminates grow over a longer season and should be mounded. Growing them in a bag makes it easy to do that. The indeterminates are known for producing larger crops, which would be even larger if our growing season lasted longer.

*What's new, interesting, confounding and delightful? Send your bits of interesting garden news to [birdchatter@alaskamastergardeners.org](mailto:birdchatter@alaskamastergardeners.org).*



**AMGA Summer Garden Tours**  
*Updated 7/26/21*

7/31/21	Les Brake, Willow,	Noon
8/2/21	Roof Top Garden, Hope Center	
8/9/21	Faye Stiehm Garden	
8/16/21	Carrol Samuelson Garden	
8/23/21	Pioneer Home Garden	
8/26/21	Grow North Farms,	6-8 pm

*7:00 PM start time unless noted differently*





Bonus photo: This mystery peony showed up in an order received by the Brown Hen Farm in Chugiak. Do tell if anyone knows the variety. Photo courtesy Elizabeth Bluemink

#### AMGA Board of Directors

Emily Becker	President
Troy Weiss	Vice President
Jan van den Top	Treasurer
Beth Norris	Secretary
Kathleen Kaiser	At Large
Keenan Plate	At Large
Nick Riordan	At Large
Faye Stiehm	At Large

#### Committee Chairs, Program Coordinators & Volunteers

Emily Becker	CES Liason
Steve Brown, Gina Dionne	CES Master Gardener Program Liaison
Faye Stiehm	Broadcast Email
Vacant	Calendar of Events
Don Bladow, Troy Weiss, Emily Becker, Fran Pekar, Gina Dionne	Advanced MG Course
Janice Berry	Directory Editor
Kathy Liska, Cindy Walker	Facebook
Troy Weiss	Meetings & Educational Programs
Troy Weiss	Garden Tours
Mary Rydesky, Gina Docherty, Jane Baldwin	Google Group Managers
Troy Weiss, Jan van den Top, Beth Norris	Grants Program
Lynn Hansen, Ruthe Rasmussen, Sharon Schlicht, Wendy Willie	Hospitality
Alexis St. Juliana	Membership Database
Elizabeth Bluemink	Newsletter Editor
Gina Docherty	Website
Lynne Opstad	Lifetime Achievement
Lynne Opstad, Julie Ginder	Pioneer Home Garden
Emily Becker, Keenan Plate	Volunteer Coordinators

## Become a Member

AMGA memberships are based on calendar year. If you have not renewed, [you can pay online](#) or you can print and mail [the form on our website](#).

Questions? Contact Alexis St. Juliana at [astjuliana@hotmail.com](mailto:astjuliana@hotmail.com)

## Next AMGA Meeting via Zoom!

**September 20, 2021**

**Urban Gardening in Anchorage**

**Nick Riordan, Keenan Plate & Nick Bachman**

**Check your email, our website or Facebook page for connection instructions.**

**Member Meetings:** 7 pm every 3rd Monday of the month, September through May (except December). Meetings are at the BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage, accessed through the BP tower parking lot. The Energy Center is just south of the main building. **2021 meetings are currently being held online.** These monthly educational programs are free and open to the public. **Visitors and guests are welcomed and encouraged.**

**Board Meetings:** 2nd Monday of the month, 6-7 pm, anyone is welcome to observe. Send an email to [president@alaskamastergardeners.org](mailto:president@alaskamastergardeners.org) for the meeting link.

The Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor at:

[newsletteramga@gmail.com](mailto:newsletteramga@gmail.com)

AMGA, Newsletter

P.O. Box 221403

Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

#### Newsletter Submission Deadline

The deadline for submitting an item for publication in the following month's edition of the AMGA newsletter is the 20th of every month. Items arriving after this date may or may not be included. Educational or garden related articles (400-600 words ideal), Bird Chatter, calendar items and announcements are always welcome.

#### Connect with AMGA

Website: [www.alaskamastergardeners.org](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage](https://www.facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage)

Youtube: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCvZehJprKkjQzivQvNDKopQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvZehJprKkjQzivQvNDKopQ)

Google Group: <https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups#!forum/AkMGA>

Mail: AMGA, P.O. Box 221403, Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

If you have questions or want to make address or email corrections, please contact Alexis St. Juliana at [astjuliana@hotmail.com](mailto:astjuliana@hotmail.com)

